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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 12 STATE 054639

SIPDIS  
BELGRADE PLEASE PASS TO PODGORICA

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AF, GG, SIPDIS  
SUBJECT: APPROACHING THE EU IN ADVANCE OF THE MAY 26-27  
FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING (GAERC)

11. (U) Classified by William Lucas, Office Director,  
EUR/ERA. Reason: 1.4(b) and (d).

12. (U) This is an action request. See paragraph 27.

13. (SBU) Summary: EU Foreign Ministers will hold their next General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) meeting in Brussels on May 26-27. We expect the agenda to include: Western Balkans, Israeli-Palestinian peace process, Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan and Georgia. As of now, Belarus, Iran and Lebanon are not/not on the GAERC agenda, but this may change and we want to raise these subjects in any case. This GAERC will be the last prior to the U.S.-EU Summit in Brdo, Slovenia on June 10, and we therefore are flagging where we want the EU to agree to stronger language on the issues above within the Summit communiqu currently under negotiation with the Slovenian Presidency and the Commission. Posts are requested to include the SIPDIS caption on their response cables. A background section covering some of these issues is provided prior to a section containing talking points. Points are to be delivered as soon as possible at the appropriate level to EU members only. Other posts should not/not deliver these points.

BACKGROUND  
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#### WESTERN BALKANS

14. (SBU) President Tadic's "For a European Serbia" coalition won a plurality of votes in the May 11 parliamentary elections, though it had been trailing in the polls the week prior. The EU decision to sign a Stabilization and Association Agreement with Serbia as well as to start the process of visa liberalization for Serbian citizens traveling to EU Member States likely helped boost support for Tadic's pro-Europe coalition. The coalition won with nearly 39% of the vote, to the Radical Party's 29%. The coalition did not win enough seats to form a government. Tadic has ruled out an alliance with the DSS of former Prime Minister Kostunica, but may ally with the Socialist Party despite ideological

differences. A coalition of Radicals, Socialists and the DSS remains a possibility, however.

15. (SBU) UN leadership in New York continues to block the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) from cooperating with the EU on handing over rule of law responsibilities in Kosovo. It is now clear from recent discussions with the UN Secretariat that the UN will not downsize UNMIK and hand over administration of Kosovo to the GOK on June 15 when Kosovo's constitution takes effect. We now expect a delay until at least August before the EULEX rule of law mission can potentially phase-in the policing and justice transition. A successful transition from UNMIK administration of Kosovo would allow the international community to complete the transition of Kosovo's status to supervised independence as stipulated by the Ahtisaari plan. In the face of staunch opposition to a EULEX presence in northern Kosovo from Serbia and Russia, however, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has ended all cooperation (including planning for the transfer of property and other logistical issues) with EULEX, while Secretary-General Ban attempts to find a formula for a transfer of authority that Russia and Serbia would approve.

#### BELARUS

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16. (C) Respect for human rights and democracy in Belarus has worsened in recent months, at the same time that the Belarusian regime has expelled all but a skeletal staff from the U.S. embassy. After pledging to release all six political prisoners that the regime held at the start of the year, and releasing five of the six by February, the regime refused to release the last and most prominent political prisoner, Alyaksandr Kazulin, and has recently sentenced two more citizens on politically motivated charges. The regime also cracked down violently on a peaceful demonstration by democratic opponents of the regime in March. Also in March, in retaliation for U.S. sanctions imposed in response to the denial of democracy and human rights in Belarus, the Belarusian regime began pressing for reductions in the staff of the U.S. embassy. Following expulsions of U.S. diplomats, the U.S. embassy now remains with only a skeletal staff. The Belarusian regime is likely trying to divide the Europeans from what it perceives as a tougher U.S. position toward Minsk. The United States and EU need to stick to a joint policy of pressure on the GOB that withholds any positive gestures toward the regime until all political prisoners are released unconditionally and that retains a strong focus on promoting democratic transition in Belarus. The United States also seeks strong signs of support from the EU, including in the U.S.-EU Summit communiqu , in response to Belarusian actions against the U.S. embassy.

#### IRAQ

17. (C) The EU is actively exploring options for engaging more directly with Iraq. From 2003-2007 the European Commission provided more than \$1 billion in assistance to Iraq, given largely to the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI) - the main multilateral mechanism for assisting Iraq. In the future, however, the EC wants to deliver its assistance bilaterally so that the EU's contributions can be more clearly identified and recognized. On March 13, the European Parliament adopted a report recommending an enhanced EU role in Iraq, including proposals to increase the EC diplomatic and assistance presence (key to this is finding new premises in Baghdad, those currently located at the British Embassy are too small); step-up support for UN activities; assist refugees; and support democracy, national reconciliation and government institutions with technical assistance and capacity building. France assumes the European Union presidency on July 1 and is also expected to encourage

greater EU engagement.

¶8. (C) Prime Minister Maliki's visit to Brussels on April 16 and 17 was a welcome step in building the EU-Iraq relationship. Maliki met with High Representative Javier Solana and thanked the EU for its Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq (EUJUST LEX). The EU committed to extend and expand this program, which to date has trained more than 1,450 Iraqi judges and other rule of law professionals in 18 EU member states. Solana expressed interest in visiting Baghdad as a follow-up to Maliki's visit to Brussels; this would further cement the EU-Iraq relationship and internationalize support for Iraq as it strives to achieve security and prosperity.

¶9. (SBU) Negotiations for a new EU-Iraq Trade and Cooperation Agreement will resume in June. Four rounds of talks have focused on such topics as human rights, trade in goods and services, and customs and taxation. The EU and Iraq are also negotiating an agreement for Iraq to supply gas to EU countries. We would like the EU to offer strong language on its intention to enhance its role in Iraq in the context of the U.S.-EU Summit communiqu.

LEBANON

¶10. (C) As of now, Lebanon is not/not on the GAERC agenda, but given recent events, we think it likely that the EU foreign ministers will end up discussing it in one venue or another at the GAERC. In any event, we believe EU foreign ministers should be encouraged to discuss EU efforts to support the democratic government of Lebanon

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¶11. (C) By taking up arms against Lebanese civilians and paralyzing Beirut, particularly the international airport, Hizballah shed the pretext of being a Lebanese entity working on behalf of Lebanon and in "resistance" to some external threat. Hizballah's actions threaten the authority of the Lebanese government, the sovereignty of the Lebanese state, and the security of the Lebanese people. More importantly, they constitute acts of terrorism and a threat to international peace and security. Hizballah's chosen path threatens the authority of the Lebanese government, sovereignty of the Lebanese state, and security of the Lebanese people. We need European governments, both individually and through the EU, to pressure Iran, Syria and Hizballah through

diplomatic or financial sanctions, and by designating Hizballah as a terrorist entity. We also strongly encourage Europe to take action against Iran and Syria to demonstrate that their systematic violations of international resolutions and support for terrorism and political violence has a cost. Accordingly, we expect the EU to back a strong statement within the U.S.-EU Summit communiqu.

¶12. (C) Unfortunately, European support for both Lebanon's legitimate government and our pro-sovereignty March 14 allies has wavered. Some EU members have suggested a political equivalency between March 14 and the Hizballah-led, Syrian and Iranian-backed opposition. EU UNIFIL contributors have been especially conciliatory, worrying that political confrontation could invite attacks against UNIFIL. European vacillation on Lebanon also stems from conflicting European opinions on whether to engage or isolate Syria. Most EU members share our concerns about Syrian interference in Lebanese politics, support for militant groups in Lebanon and the Palestinian territories, facilitation of flows of foreign fighters into Iraq, efforts to undermine the peace process, and possession of weapons of mass destruction and an unreported nuclear program. However, robust European economic ties with Syria leave little appetite for full isolation. For its part, Syria has effectively courted European engagement by promising breakthroughs in Lebanon or on the peace process. Syria is exploiting European engagement to legitimize its destabilizing foreign policies and repressive domestic rule. The EU Council has

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several times designated High Representative Solana as its sole interlocutor with Syria, but members have consistently broken ranks.

IRAN

¶13. (C) For several months now, we have urged the EU to take three new actions on Iran in order to pressure it to suspend its proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities and come to the negotiating table: 1) Adopt UNSCR 1803 into EU policy, 2) designate 20 additional entities (including Bank Melli) and 15 additional individuals associated with Iran's nuclear and missile programs under existing EU policy, and 3) adopt a series of truly new autonomous measures that go beyond existing EU policy. If the EU is able to take all three of these steps, it will send a strong signal to Iran and encourage others to do likewise. The additional designations have been moving forward since Italy and Cyprus lifted their holds on them in late April. We expected the full additional designation list to be formally adopted without discussion at an EU Council meeting (Agriculture and Fisheries ministers) on May 19, but the EU again delayed action.

¶14. (C) Unfortunately, the situation with the adoption of UNSCR 1803 into EU policy and adoption of new autonomous measures to go beyond existing EU policy is not so positive. Adoption of 1803 into EU policy has been delayed by internal EU discussion on whether to carry out a minimalist, literal implementation of the resolution or to go beyond mere transposition of 1803 and include new EU measures in the updated policy and regulations. A meeting of EU Political and Security Committee ambassadors in late April failed to reach consensus on these issues and the Slovenian EU Presidency has not set a time line for future deliberation on 1803 implementation and new measures. Behind the scenes, the UK and France want to ensure that they have the support of a critical mass of countries for a concrete (and expansive) 1803 package before holding another discussion with all 27 member states. In particular, they wish to avoid any open-ended, undisciplined debate on the matter. EU Iran watchers in

Brussels tell USEU that it is unlikely the Slovenians have enough time or the desire to pursue this task before the end of their Presidency on 30 June. Thus, even though we have urged the EU to act on all three measures described above at the May 26-27 GAERC, some may want to wait for the start of the French Presidency on July 1. We should not accept this delay, however, and should press EU members to take quick action, lest they send Tehran the signal that Europe does not want to keep pressure on Iran. We place particular priority on the EU taking action prior to the June 10 U.S.-EU Summit, rather than postponing decisions until after the Summit.

¶15. (C) On May 13, the Iranian government delivered letters from FM Mottaki to the P5+1 calling for negotiations on a wide range of issues. These letters were accompanied by a two-page memorandum listing possible areas of discussion, including terrorism, drugs, organized crime, trade, investment, and the nuclear issue. However, the package broke no new ground and offered no specific proposals. At the same time, Iranian President Ahmadinejad stated publicly that Iran would not/not suspend its nuclear enrichment and other proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities, as required by the UNSC. The P5+1 will deliver to the Iranians the refreshed package offering incentives in exchange for Iran suspending enrichment and other proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities.

#### ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE

¶16. (SBU) The United States is working toward the vision of a two-state solution with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace, stability, prosperity, and dignity.

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The Annapolis Conference in November 2007 re-launched Israeli-Palestinian bilateral negotiations with the shared goal of a peace agreement before the end of 2008. The parties further undertook to fulfill their commitments under the 2003 Roadmap, and agreed that implementation of any peace agreement must be subject to implementation of the Roadmap. The U.S. agreed at Annapolis to monitor and judge the parties' progress under the Roadmap. Since Annapolis, we have been working to achieve progress on four tracks: bilateral negotiations, implementation of the Roadmap and improving conditions on the ground, building Palestinian institutional capacity and supporting economic development, and sustaining and expanding regional support for the process.

¶17. (SBU) Bilateral negotiations began in earnest shortly after Annapolis with the creation of a negotiating structure and a vigorous schedule of bilateral talks on the full spectrum of issues. The parties have kept the substance of these talks private, which reflects the seriousness of their effort. As part of this effort, Secretary Rice has enlisted the services of General (ret.) Jim Jones, former Commandant of the Marine Corps and NATO Supreme Allied Commander, who is looking at the security aspects of permanent status. The Secretary and Assistant Secretary Welch are also deeply and personally engaged in supporting the parties' efforts in this area. We must recognize, however, that a peace agreement cannot be imposed from outside, and it is the parties themselves who must work through the difficult compromises necessary for peace. The United States will support them in this task, will work to ensure the talks stay on track, and when appropriate we will offer ideas to help facilitate progress.

¶18. (SBU) We are working to promote progress by the parties in fulfilling their commitments under the Roadmap. For the Palestinians, this means combating and dismantling the infrastructure of terrorism, undertaking institutional



reforms, and ending incitement. For Israel, it means halting settlement expansion, removing unauthorized outposts, easing movement and access to improve Palestinian economic and humanitarian conditions, facilitating security coordination, and re-opening Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem consistent with previous agreements. The President and Secretary Rice have asked LTG William Fraser III to monitor developments in this area and to work with the parties to promote progress on Roadmap implementation. Given the secret nature of the bilateral negotiations, progress on the ground is crucial to reflect the seriousness of the process as well as progress that is being achieved in the negotiations.

¶19. (SBU) We are also working to support Palestinian economic development and institutional capacity building. France hosted a donors' conference in December which generated pledges of \$7.7 billion dollars in budgetary and programmatic support for the PA. The Ad Hoc Liaison Committee met on May 2 to maintain close donor coordination. Former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, in his role as Quartet Representative, has taken a leadership role on this issue, identifying priority projects and working with the parties and international donors to facilitate implementation on the ground. The United States is doing its part. In Paris, we pledged \$555 million in support for the PA, including \$150 million in budgetary support, which was delivered to the Fayyad government in mid-March. Additionally, LTG Keith Dayton, the U.S. Security Coordinator, is working to reform and professionalize the Palestinian security forces, including a program providing training and non-lethal equipment. There is a particularly urgent need for budgetary support for the Palestinians, and we are strongly encouraging Arab governments to do their part.

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¶20. (SBU) Finally, we are working to sustain and expand regional support for the parties' efforts. Arab political and financial support will be crucial in order for both Israel and the Palestinians to make the painful compromises necessary for peace. The Arab Peace Initiative was an important step. Now, as President Bush said in July 2007, "Arab nations should build on this initiative - by ending the fiction that Israel does not exist, stopping the incitement of hatred in their official media, and sending cabinet-level visitors to Israel."

¶21. (SBU) We will continue to work to promote progress on each of these four tracks, each of them vital to the goal of a peace agreement by the end of the year. Secretary Rice is traveling regularly to the region to advance the process. President Bush's January trip to Israel and the West Bank, his first as President, and his second trip in May reflect his personal engagement and commitment to this issue. There are substantial obstacles that must be overcome to reach the goal of a permanent status agreement. Hardliners on all sides are working to undermine the leaders' efforts as evidenced by the serious escalation of violence in Gaza and southern Israel in February and March, and the tragic terrorist attack in Jerusalem on March 6. Nevertheless, we remain hopeful that an agreement can be reached before the end of 2008.

#### AFGHANISTAN

¶22. (SBU) The European Commission has expressed support for our plan to include all pledges made since the 2006 London Conference in our pledges at the June 12 Afghanistan support conference in Paris. This allows the Commission to include its 600 million Euro, four year commitment (2007-2010) and its 2007 33 million Euro pledge of humanitarian assistance. This totals roughly \$1 billion for the Commission alone. We need to convince Member States to follow this scheme in their bilateral

pledges.

#### SOMALIA

¶23. (SBU) The United States continues to support the transitional political process outlined by Somalia's Transitional Federal Charter, which provides the mandate for the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and outlines a process leading to national elections in 2009, as the best framework for achieving lasting peace and stability in Somalia. We are currently supporting the efforts of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) to facilitate discussions between the TFG and the opposition in Djibouti. In order for the transitional political process to move forward successfully, however, we must also continue our efforts to improve the security environment inside Somalia by supporting the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and longer-term security sector reform efforts. We also continue to focus on the issue of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia, are working with our Security Council partners, and hope to adopt soon a UNSC resolution on this subject.

#### GEORGIA

¶24. (SBU) Russia has recently taken a number of provocative actions in the Abkhazia region of Georgia. On March 6, Russia unilaterally withdrew from CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) economic and military sanctions on Abkhazia, opening the way for Russia to provide arms and military equipment to the Abkhaz (although thus far, the Russians have said they have no intention to do so). On April 16, President Putin issued instructions to Russian ministries authorizing them to establish direct contacts with separatist institutions in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. On April 20, a Russian plane shot down a Georgian UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) over Abkhazia in violation of Georgia's sovereignty. On April

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29 the Russian Foreign Ministry announced it would increase the number of CIS peacekeepers in Abkhazia by deploying additional troops, further heightening tensions in the region and increasing the risk for miscalculation. Finally, Russian officials have publicly stated that if Georgia were to undertake military actions in Abkhazia or South Ossetia, Russia would intervene militarily.

¶25. (SBU) Georgia has responded with restraint, but has publicly and privately expressed its alarm over the situation. President Saakashvili has announced new initiatives to peacefully solve the conflict by granting Abkhazia wide autonomy, and the Georgian government has created several working groups on the proposals. In addition, efforts are underway to re-energize the Abkhaz peace process, specifically through a meeting of senior Georgian/Abkhaz officials in Sweden next month; a follow up meeting in Berlin in July; and convening of a peace conference (with U.S., EU, Russian, UN and other states) to offer a new forum for Georgian-Abkhaz talks. In the U.S.-EU Summit communiqu , we believe it is important that the U.S. and EU reflect a strong consensus in support of Georgia's territorial integrity, call on Russia to reverse its actions, and encourage direct talks between the Georgian government and the Abkhaz to advance the peace process.

¶26. (SBU) The campaign for May 21 parliamentary elections in Georgia is proceeding without major incident so far. Clean elections - including a fair and transparent election grievance process - would help restore Georgia as a regional leader in democratic reform after the violent dispersal of demonstrations in November 2007 and a flawed presidential election on January 6, 2008.

127. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST: Please deliver the following points to the appropriate MFA official(s) as soon as possible (in advance of the May 26-27 GAERC).

BEGIN NON-PAPER TEXT

WESTERN BALKANS

-- We welcome the results of the May 11 Serbian Parliamentary elections and the desire of the Serbian people for a European future. We applaud the EU for its decision to sign a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with Serbia and to begin the process of visa liberalization for Serbian citizens. We need to wait and see what the new government does, but we hope Serbia will remain on a path toward EU integration. Regardless of which coalition emerges, we need to continue to urge Serbia to cooperate with us on Kosovo to support peace and stability and to avoid provocative acts.

-- We strongly encourage the EU to sign the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) with Bosnia-Herzegovina at the May GAERC meeting. We understand the technical complexity of the translation, but a rapid signature is essential to maintaining positive political momentum in BiH and sending a clear signal of the EU's commitment to BiH's European future. As we've seen in the recent Serbian elections, the prospect of a European perspective remains a strong and vital force for change in the Western Balkans.

-- We urge the EU to develop and implement a contingency plan for fully implementing the EULEX Kosovo mission regardless of UNMIK's current inability to cooperate. The EU and UN need to begin now an intensive dialogue to determine the operational parameters of a "staged deployment" of EULEX.

-- The U.S. supports an initial EULEX deployment which could, as necessary, proceed along functional lines in coordination with a residual operation role of UNMIK.

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However, we must all impress upon UN SYG Ban the importance of an arrangement with EULEX that does not phase-in EULEX along ethnic or geographic lines or hint at partition, does not allow security "gaps," and respects the EU's need for decision-making and budgetary autonomy.

-- UNMIK cannot continue to "administer" Kosovo after June 15, when the International Civilian Office (ICO) assumes supervisory authority over an independent Kosovo on that date as envisioned by Ahtisaari. We are open to a residual UN presence in Kosovo, but it must not in any way govern Kosovo or interfere with the ICO's work.

-- (For Prague, Lisbon and Valletta only:) We strongly encourage your government to join us, the nearly three-fourths of EU member states and the many other European nations which have recognized Kosovo's independence. Your recognition would send a positive sign of solidarity with the people of Kosovo who crave stability and normalcy after years of conflict and would greatly assist Kosovo's rapid transition into the international family of nations. Continuing not to recognize Kosovo only complicates the difficulty the EU is facing in ensuring the smooth, peaceful transition from UNMIK to the EULEX mission.

BELARUS

-- We urge the EU to maintain pressure on the GOB, and to withhold any incentives to the regime until it releases all political prisoners unconditionally.

-- We ask that the EU postpone the formal opening an EU



office in Belarus and that Sweden postpone opening an Embassy in Belarus while the GOB maintains its campaign of actions to hobble the U.S. embassy in Minsk. Lukashenka's clear objective is to divide the U.S. and EU regarding Belarus policy, and we must not allow his regime to succeed in muddying our strong joint message against the GOB's repressive policies.

-- We invite the EU to consider other measures to increase the pressure on the GOB so that the USG and EU present a united front to the GOB regarding political prisoners to secure their timely release so that we can overcome this impasse and focus on promoting democratic transition in Belarus. We believe it is important to reflect a strong message of U.S.-EU solidarity at the June 10 U.S.-EU Summit by, within the communiqu , 1) calling for the unconditional and immediate release of all political prisoners, 2) indicating our willingness to continue to take action against Belarusian officials responsible for human rights abuses as cultivating a climate of repression, and 3) condemning the use of coercive measures taken against the U.S. Embassy.

#### IRAQ

-- An expanded European presence (including more Embassies/diplomatic offices from Member States and a larger EC office) would be welcomed by the U.S. and the Iraqis. The EU can also be helpful by encouraging Iraq's neighbors to play a more constructive role (including by asking them to send Ambassadors/open Embassies), speaking out against Iran's lethal aid to select Shia militant groups, and by continuing to contribute generously to humanitarian programs assisting displaced Iraqis.

-- We welcome the April 14 decision to extend and expand the rule of law mandate of the EUJUST LEX mission and encourage the EU to engage in other assistance programs. We encourage the EU to offer strong language on its intention to enhance its role in Iraq in the context of the U.S.-EU Summit communiqu .

-- A visit to Iraq by High Representative Solana would be an effective follow-up to Maliki's visit to Brussels. We encourage an early visit, as well other exchanges of senior-level visitors.

#### LEBANON

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-- We need Europe to stand with us in support of the legitimate Lebanese government and our pro-sovereignty March 14 allies, who need our help now more than ever. We are deeply concerned by the current situation, where Hizballah and its allies have used intimidation and violence to challenge the authority of the Lebanese government. We view the current situation as a serious threat to international peace and security.

-- We need to send stronger public and private messages that (1) distinguish between the legitimate authority of the Lebanese government and illegitimate resort to violence by Hizballah and its allies, (2) stress the deleterious social and economic effects for all Lebanese of the demonstrations and violence, (3) urge all sides to maintain the fragile ceasefire and withdraw from the streets, (4) hold Hizballah, its allies, and its international backers responsible, and (5) condemn Iran and Syria for their continued interference in Lebanon and provision of lethal support to Hizballah in violation of UNSCRs 1559 and 1701.

-- We ask that the EU and/or members states immediately designate Hizballah in its entirety as a terrorist organization. This is critical to our long-term efforts to mitigate the international terrorist threat posed by Hizballah and prevent further unrest in Lebanon. We have made this request to the EU and its member states to designate Hizballah in the past. We are asking again now given our firm conviction that Hizballah's recent actions

in Lebanon have ended debate about the true nature of the organization. Hizballah is using violence against Lebanon's civilian population in pursuit of its narrow political agenda. This is terrorism.

-- We also need to demonstrate to Syria and Iran that their support for political violence and illegal armed groups - in violation of multiple UNSC resolutions -- has a cost. Hizballah and the opposition feel they have won and hope to trade their gains made at gunpoint for political concessions. We need to level the playing field. We believe Syria can be prevented from playing a harmful role in this crisis and might be moved to do so if Europe held it to account for the actions of its proxies. We also urge you to forego high-level engagement with Syria. We expect the U.S.-EU Summit communiqu   to address these issues clearly, particularly calling on Syria to end its interference with Lebanon's democratic development.  
IRAN

-- (If the pending EU designations have been adopted by the time of the GAERC): We were pleased by the EU's designation of a large number of additional individuals and entities associated with Iran's nuclear and missile programs. The announcement and application of these new restrictive EU measures will send a strong message to Iran and the international community.

-- (If the pending EU designations have not/not been adopted): We regret that the EU has thus far moved so slowly in all three areas of pending action on Iran sanctions. We had expected, at a minimum, that the pending list designating additional individuals and entities associated with Iran's nuclear and missile programs would be adopted by now.

-- We regret that the EU has still been unable to reach consensus on implementation of UNSCR 1803 and a strong package of new EU measures to accompany the implementation of the resolution. This delay weakens the impact of UNSCR 1803 and the new EU designations, and dilutes the message of EU resolve. Iran has deepened its defiance of the UNSC by beginning testing of an advanced centrifuge design using nuclear material and expanding its installation of centrifuges at its Fuel Enrichment Plant at Natanz.

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-- Additional, substantive actions are critical to demonstrate to the Iranian regime that it cannot continue to ignore the international community. This, in turn, is an essential element of our effort to secure a diplomatic solution to this issue.

-- It is critical that the EU demonstrate a strong, united front toward Iran. A strong package of EU sanctions would not only send a clear signal of EU resolve, but will also remove the excuse of other countries for not acting against Iran. Middle Eastern states and other key members of the international community are looking to the EU for leadership on Iran, and are likely to follow its lead, either in taking decisive steps or in delaying action.

-- We would like the EU to adopt the provisions in UNSCR 1803 into EU policy and regulations as soon as possible, along with the strongest possible package of new autonomous sanctions. Ideally this would happen at the May 26-27 GAERC. We urge the EU to take these steps as soon as possible, and no later than the June 10 U.S.-EU Summit. The credibility of the EU, the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and the UNSC is at stake.

-- We have received the package of proposals for negotiations presented by the Iranian regime on May 13. We do not, however, see it as a serious offer of good faith negotiations. We are, however, presenting again the

generous incentives package first proposed by the P5+1 in June 2006 as a basis for cooperation by Iran. At the center of our concern is Iran's nuclear program and the need for Iran to comply with its UNSCR obligations.

#### ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE

-- The U.S. remains firmly committed to a two-state solution and is working to support Israeli and Palestinian efforts to achieve a peace agreement before the end of 2008. President Bush and Secretary Rice are personally engaged and view this as a U.S. national interest.

-- It will be vital for the international community to continue to support not only the negotiating process, but also Palestinian institutional capacity building and economic development. Budgetary support is especially crucial as the Palestinian Authority faces a projected budget shortfall of approximately \$400-600 million in 2008.

-- We appreciate critical EU assistance to date, and urge that EU and Member States continue to do all they can to support Palestinian Authority (PA) President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad and help meet the needs of the Palestinian people and support the negotiations.

-- The new PA government has made clear it will not negotiate with Hamas - we should respect this decision.

-- The situation in Gaza is complicated and poses a serious challenge, as the security, economic, and humanitarian conditions continue to deteriorate. There is no easy solution to this problem, but a new approach is needed and we are talking with Israel, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority leadership about developing an approach that would provide security for Israel, Egypt and the PA, support the legitimate Palestinian Authority, ensure humanitarian needs are being met in Gaza, work towards the resumption of normal economic life for the people of Gaza, and restore conditions that would permit the implementation of the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access.

-- The United States will not abandon the people of Gaza. We continue to provide humanitarian assistance through the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and other international organizations.

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SUBJECT: APPROACHING THE EU IN ADVANCE OF THE MAY 26-27 FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING (GAER)

As the Secretary noted in her remarks with President Abbas earlier this month, the U.S. is looking to increase our assistance to humanitarian relief organizations working in Gaza and we'll be doing that very soon.

-- Continued Israeli settlement construction is a problem. It is inconsistent with the Roadmap and does not contribute to creating an environment supportive of negotiations. The Roadmap calls for a freeze on settlement activity and we expect Israel to fulfill its commitments under the Roadmap and to avoid any actions that could prejudice issues that must be resolved through negotiations. With respect to outposts, Israel has committed to removing them and as President Bush has said, they need to go.

#### AFGHANISTAN

-- The European Commission has expressed support for our plan to include all pledges made since the 2006 London Conference in our pledges at the June 12 Afghanistan support conference in Paris. This allows the Commission to include its 600 million Euro, four year commitment (2007-2010) and its 2007 33 million Euro pledge of humanitarian assistance. This totals roughly \$1 billion.

We hope that EU member states will follow this approach in their bilateral pledges.

-- The European Commission and Kai Eide have expressed Paris goals that parallel ours. We agree that the Paris Conference will be a platform to reaffirm our long-term commitment to Afghanistan, put Kai Eide in the lead, fund an Afghan-led development strategy, fund elections in particular, and commit to improve aid effectiveness.

-- We also agree that the Afghans should commit to improving accountability and fighting corruption. We are already working with the Afghan Government to take concrete steps demonstrating this commitment prior to Paris.

-- We applaud Afghanistan's efforts to paint a comprehensive approach to development, but agree that the five-year plan needs more prioritization among its goals. We are hopeful that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund will approve the plan at their Board Reviews on June 2 and 3 and set a positive tone going into the June 4 Senior Officials meeting.

#### SOMALIA

-- While we continue to support the ongoing political dialogue process, we urge the EU and its member states to provide financial support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) as a key element in helping to create the conditions for lasting peace and stability.

-- The U.S. also remains deeply concerned about the increasing number of acts of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia, and strongly supports regional efforts to strengthen maritime security.

-- In February, the TFG requested assistance from the UN Security Council in fighting piracy in waters off the coast of Somalia. In response, the U.S., U.K., France, and Panama have co-sponsored a draft resolution that would authorize states, in cooperation with the TFG, to take steps in deterring, preventing, and suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery off the Somali coast.

-- The purpose of the resolution is to provide a clear basis for member state involvement in counterpiracy efforts under the UN Charter and international law. Although some Security Council members have voiced concerns about the impact of the resolution on Somalia's sovereignty, the resolution is fully consistent with

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#### GEORGIA

-- We appreciate the visit to Georgia on May 12 by several EU FMs and their strong statements condemning all activities increasing tensions in the region and emphasizing the need for Georgian authorities to provide for free and fair elections on May 21, stressing the role of a free and independent media.

-- We must continue to urge Russia to decrease tensions in Georgia by repealing the Presidential Instructions authorizing increased government contacts with Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and by withdrawing the airborne troops and artillery deployed to its peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia.

-- We must call on Russia to actively encourage direct talks between the Georgian government and the Abkhaz, talks in which Moscow has discouraged the Abkhaz from participating in the past. We will continue to press President Medvedev to work with President Saakashvili to reduce tensions and to facilitate direct Abkhaz-Georgian engagement on Tbilisi's peace proposals.

-- We also encourage your support for efforts to re-energize the peace process, including a meeting of senior Georgian/Abkhaz officials in Sweden next month; a follow up meeting in Berlin in July; and convening of a peace conference (with U.S., EU, Russian, UN and other states) to offer a new forum for Georgian-Abkhaz talks.

-- We would welcome additional EU steps to strengthen Georgia's territorial integrity, such as denying EU visa facilitation to Russian passport holders who reside in Abkhazia and a call for an end to illegal foreign investment in Abkhazia.

-- We also need to call on Georgia to continue showing restraint in response to provocations and call on Tbilisi to further develop and implement its peace plan in collaboration with Abkhaz authorities.

-- We warmly welcome the continued efforts of EU Special Representative Semneby and the European Commission in implementing confidence-building measures, and we applaud the Commission's allocation of 2 million Euros to support preparations for the crucial parliamentary elections.

-- We strongly support a European Instant Assessment Mechanism to investigate the April 20 shoot-down of a Georgian UAV. We see this as complementary to the UN's investigation of the incident, which we understand will be concluded soon.

- At the U.S.-EU Summit, we believe that we should, in the communiqué, reiterate our commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia, call on Russia to reverse its recent provocative actions in Abkhazia, call on all parties to refrain from further escalating tensions, welcome the Georgian Government's recent peace initiatives on Abkhazia, and call on the separatist authorities in Abkhazia to engage in direct talks with Tbilisi.

END NON-PAPER TEXT  
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